

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BONN 13328 142159Z

73

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 13328

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MILI, GW

SUBJECT: FRG DEFENSE BUDGET: DEFENSE MINISTER'S

COMMENTS TO AMBASSADOR

1. DURING A SEPTEMBER 13 MEETING WITH THE AMBASSADOR, DEFENSE MINISTER LEBER SAID THAT HE WAS GENERALLY SATISFIED WITH THE RISE IN DEFENSE SPENDING PROVIDED FOR IN THE 1974 FRG BUDGET. LEBER SAID THE GERMAN PRESS HAD MADE MUCH OF THE FACT THAT, IN VIEW OF DOMESTIC POLITICAL REQUIREMENTS, THE PROPOSED 1974 DEFENSE BUDGET OF DM 27.55 BILLION REPRESENTED AN INCREASE OVER THE 1973 DEFENSE BUDGET OF ONLY 6.7 PERCENT--I.E., LESS THAN THE CURRENT ROUGHLY 7 PLUS PERCENT ANNUAL RATE OF INFLATION. LEBER SAID HE WANTED US TO KNOW IN CONFIDENCE THAT THE 6.7 PERCENT RISE REPRESENTED ONLY "THE JUSO (YOUNG SOCIALISTS) BUDGET."

2. IN POINT OF FACT, CONTINUED LEBER, THE TRUE 1974
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PAGE 02 BONN 13328 142159Z

FRG DEFENSE BUDGET, WHICH HE TERMED "THE NATO BUDGET,"

ENTAILED AN INCREASE OF TEN OR PERHAPS ELEVEN PERCENT
OVER TOTAL 1973 DEFENSE SPENDING. THIS IS THE RESULT
OF TWO FACTORS: (A) ANY INCREASE OVER 1973 PERSONNEL
COSTS WILL BE COVERED OUT OF OTHER NON-DEFENSE PORTIONS
OF THE FRG BUDGET; AND (B) PENSION BENEFITS (FOR
VETERANS) PAID OUT OF THE 1973 DEFENSE BUDGET ALSO
ARE TO BE PAID OUT OF NON-DEFENSE PORTIONS OF THE
1974 FRG BUDGET. WHILE SOME ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR
OFFSET FORMERLY IN THE FINANCE MINISTRY BUDGET WILL
NOW BE PAID OUT OF THE 1974 DEFENSE BUDGET, THE TOTAL
OF THESE ADDITIONAL OFFSET FUNDS WILL BE LESS THAN
THE CITED PENSION BENEFITS.

3. EMBASSY ANALYSIS OF 1974 DEFENSE BUDGET FOLLOWS
BY AIRGRAM.
HILLENBRAND

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